

CITY OF WILLARD, MISSOURI

224 W. Jackson Street P.O. Box 187 Willard, MO 65781 417-742-3033 417-742-3080 Fax



SUBJECT: Ordinance Establishing the Customer Round-Up and Donation Assistance Program

Purpose

The proposed ordinance establishes a voluntary *Customer Round-Up and Donation Assistance Program* allowing Willard utility customers to contribute small, optional amounts to assist residents experiencing financial hardship in paying their utility bills. The intent is to provide a structured, transparent, and community-driven method for neighbors to help neighbors without burdening general funds.

Program Overview

- **Voluntary Contributions:** Customers may elect to round up their monthly bill to the nearest dollar or contribute a fixed or one-time donation.
- **Restricted Use:** All collected funds will be deposited into a non-interest-bearing account dedicated exclusively to assisting customers in need.
- **Third-Party Administration:** Eligibility for assistance will be determined by a qualified external organization experienced in means-testing or administering public assistance, ensuring impartiality and fairness.
- **Disbursement Controls:** Funds will be applied only to City utility accounts, and no individual will receive more than a reasonable share of available funds. Repeated or ongoing assistance will be limited to ensure equitable distribution.

Oversight and Transparency

- The City Administrator will provide periodic reports to the Board detailing contributions, disbursements, and total customers assisted (without identifying recipients).
- Should the program ever be discontinued, all remaining funds will be donated to an appropriate charitable organization assisting citizens in hardship.
- Prior to such disposition, notice will be publicly issued, public input will be solicited across two Board meetings, and the final donation recipient will be approved by Board resolution.

Rationale and Benefits

This program offers a **no-cost, community-supported assistance tool** that:

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- Provides emergency relief for local residents facing temporary hardship;
- Strengthens community bonds through voluntary giving;
- Demonstrates the City's commitment to compassion, fairness, and transparency; and
- Ensures all funds are handled with fiscal integrity and clear oversight.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance establishing the Customer Round-Up and Donation Assistance Program. This initiative reflects Willard's continued commitment to responsible governance and one community while ensuring sound financial and administrative management of public and donated funds.

Please let me know if further clarification or additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wesley Young', is written over a faint, larger blue signature.

Wesley Young, MPA, CPM
City Administrator
City of Willard